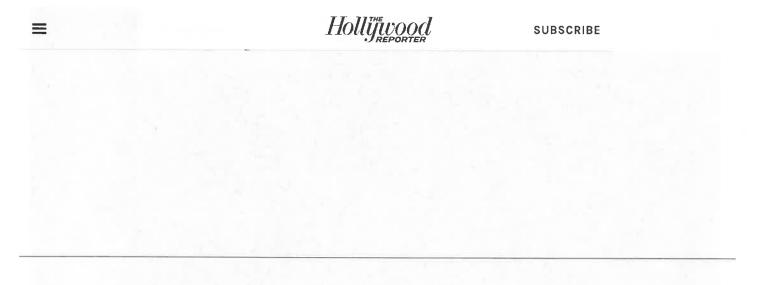
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Court Sides With 'Iron Sky' Producers in Copyright Suit

A Finnish court on Thursday ruled in favor of the producers of the "Nazis on the Moon" film 'Iron Sky' in a copyright suit brought by animators and visual effects technicians. The court dismissed the basis of the suit, whereby the animators claimed the producers used their copyright-protected work for sequels to the cult sci-fi feature without first obtaining permission or giving proper compensation.

BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGHMAY 31, 2018 9:09AM





Berlinale Film Festival Press Still Iron Sky - H 2012

BERLINALE FILM FESTIVAL

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The suit centered on design elements, including the design of spaceships used in the 2012 film. The five claimants accused Finnish producers Blind Spot and the Iron Sky Universe, the group that handles rights to the *Iron Sky* brand, of improperly and illegally using these elements on planned sequels to the original film. The plaintiffs claimed their creative contribution to the *Iron Sky* franchise is such that they should also be considered as joint copyright holders of the original movie.

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The ruling is currently only available in Finnish, but *The Hollywood Reporter* has seen a translated version provided by the producers of *Iron Sky*. It reads, in part, that the court found that the plaintiffs "have no copyright to the film(s) *Iron Sky* or (the upcoming sequel) *Iron Sky: The Coming Race* or to any material that they have made for those movies." The court awarded copyright to the animators in a single case, the design of the film's Japanese spaceship. But they concluded the copyright had been legally transferred to Blind Spot Pictures.

The court ordered the plaintiffs to pay legal costs for both Blind Spot and Iron Sky Universe.

"Of course I'm relieved the courts have sided with us. I would have been very surprised if the decision had gone any other way," *Iron Sky* producer Tero Kaukomaa told *THR*. "But this legal issue has had an impact. Our shooting schedule for *Iron Sky: The Coming Race* has been delayed because of it."

In an email exchange with *THR*, Trevor Baylis, lead plaintiff in the case, declined to comment, as he does not read Finnish and was waiting for an official English version of the ruling. But he noted that "on the face of it," the court's ruling "seems somewhat illogical" and said he didn't see "how this decision can stand."

The plaintiffs have the right to appeal Thursday's decision.

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Iron Sky: The Coming Race, which stars Stephanie Paul, Tom Green, Julia Dietze and Udo Kier, is currently shooting and will wrap production later this year. Blind Spot is expected to announce a release date for the film shortly. The producers are also working on a separate film, Iron Sky: The Ark, set in the Iron Sky universe but not described as a sequel to the original film.

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